

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
1335 H STREET, WASHINGTON 5, D. C.

BACTERIOLOGY, HYGIENE  
AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

October 17, 1949

Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
Assistant Professor of Genetics  
College of Agriculture  
The University of Wisconsin  
Madison 6, Wisc.

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

I am happy to find I do have the culture you are looking for, as mentioned in your letter of October 13. I enclose with this letter two ampules of Garrett strain. These cultures were put away more than ten years ago, and I can only hope they are still satisfactory.

You will notice in each of the ampules a small amount of white chemical which moves freely and a deposit which is on the sides and bottom of the tubes. This white chemical is a drying agent and is to be discarded when the tube is opened. To culture them from these desiccated materials, one carefully cleans the tapering end of the ampule and, after flaming it to render it sterile, breaks it. The loose desiccating agent can then be shaken out. Next, I have usually taken a sterile straight needle dipped in sterile broth and introduced it into the tube, taking up some of the deposit which adheres to the sides and bottom. This, when transferred to a tube of nutrient broth, should result in good growth within twenty-four hours. I am sending you two of these because I can do so, although I suppose that in your experienced hands if one does not grow, neither will the other.

I have not opened any of these desiccated tubes for two or three years, but I have reason to hope they are all still viable, since the desiccation was done by a very able worker, the late Dr. Alden Roe, and since the tubes have been kept continuously at low temperature.

I sincerely regret I have not had time for several years to do active bacteriological work but I remain, nevertheless, much interested in these problems, and I hope indeed our understanding of the fermentation of lactose by the coliform bacteria can be made more clear. I hope you may send me reports of your work from time to time, for I am interested in the genetics of microbes. In fact, I want to go on record as having had a very small part in the development of this subject in this country. I organized and presided at a round table on

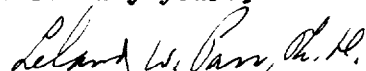
Dr. Joshua Lederberg

-2-

October 17, 1949

this subject at the annual meeting of the S.A.B. in Baltimore in 1941. Of course, those in the field who are now working on the genetics of microbes have gone very far, so much so that my earlier contributions amount to very little. However, it gives one considerable satisfaction to feel a field in which he was once interested has importance, and I am glad indeed I happen to have the culture you asked for. I hope it is still satisfactory.

Cordially yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leland W. Parr, Ph.D.".

Leland W. Parr  
Professor of Bacteriology

LWP:ms